

March 17, 2014

To: Members of the Education Committee

From: Vincent J. Loffredo, Member of Middletown Board of Education

Re: SB 477 AAC Boards of Education

I support SB 477 AAC Boards of Education.

I was elected to the Middletown Board of Education in November 2013. Part of my duties includes participating in expulsion hearings.

On February 24, I participated in my first such hearing. To say the least, it was very much an eye-opener. It involved the consideration of the expulsion of a kindergarten child who brought a BB gun to school. Such a gun is categorized by our Connecticut statutes as a deadly weapon, and the bringing of such a weapon by a student to school requires a "mandatory" one-year expulsion. It also requires that this type of expulsion be part of the child's permanent record and cannot be expunged.

SB 477 provides local boards of education reasonable flexibility when dealing with this issue with children from four to eight years of age.

Thank you for raising this bill. And thank you in particular to Senator Dante Bartolomeo, who represents part of Middletown, for bringing this issue forward on behalf of the Middletown Board of Education.

Your consideration and support of this bill is greatly appreciated.

Attached – Letter of February 25, 2014, to State Senator Dante Bartolomeo from Superintendent Dr. Patricia Charles for the Middletown Public Schools



# Middletown Public Schools

Patricia Charles, Ed.D., Superintendent of Schools

February 25, 2014

State Senator Dante Bartolomeo  
Legislative Office Building, Room 3204  
Hartford, CT 06106-1591

Dear Senator Bartolomeo,

Yesterday, members of the Middletown Board of Education met for an expulsion hearing of a kindergarten student who was found in possession of a BB gun on school property. The Board understands that possession of a deadly weapon as defined in Conn. Gen. Statute 53a-3 "any weapon whether loaded or unloaded, from which a shot may be discharged,..." is a mandatory expulsion. However, the Board was troubled by the additional statutory guidance that would prohibit this expulsion from being expunged from the student's record. Connecticut General Statute 10-233d(f) indicates:

*(f) (1) whenever a pupil is expelled pursuant to the provisions of this section, notice of the expulsion and the conduct for which the pupil was expelled shall be included on the pupil's cumulative educational record. Such notice, except for notice of an expulsion based on possession of a firearm or deadly weapon as described in subsection (a) of this section, shall be expunged from the cumulative educational record by the local or regional board of education if a pupil graduates from high school, except as provided for in subdivision (2) of this subsection.*

The Board directed me to ask our legislators for a special exception from this statute that prevents this expulsion from being expunged from the child's permanent record considering the age of the student and the lack of maturity that led to this misconduct.

I would like to explore a legislative exception that would allow the Middletown Board of Education to expunge this expulsion from the student's cumulative record, if he demonstrates positive behavior and avoids any misbehavior for which he could be suspended or expelled for an amount of time determined to be appropriate to the legislative body. Any guidance you can offer that will help us achieve this goal would be greatly appreciated.

Sincerely,

Patricia Charles  
Superintendent

cc: Middletown Board of Education  
State Senator Paul Doyle  
State Representative Matthew Lesser  
State Representative Joseph Serra